

Hattie's Vacation.

BY EVELYN.

Only a minor teacher in a village school, with a salary of fifty dollars per month. I was an orphan, and lived with my aunt, my mother's sister, to whom I owed a debt of gratitude. We lived alone, in a modest, unpretentious way, in a neat little cottage, situated on the outskirts of the village, ten minutes' walk from my school.

I had no sister nor brother, therefore was devotedly attached to my now absent cousin, Gertrude, whom my mother reared from infancy. We naturally looked on each other as sisters and the dearest of companions. But she left the village, prepared to travel and seek a position as governess, while I remained with my aunt near the lonely old home that was now deserted. It was nearly three years since we parted, Gertrude and I. I had heard frequently from her. In her last letter she told me she was engaged to be married, but declined to give me the particulars, saying she hoped soon to have good news to tell me.

"Oh, how I waited and longed for letters from Gertrude! I thought often, as the weeks went by, that she must have entirely forgotten me. It was probable that she was married, and had found a new and nobler love than mine.

I was absorbed in these reflections, when the postman thrust in the open window of the school-house a letter which he held in his hand. In a moment the envelope flew open.

"Oh, it is from Gertrude! Dear Gertrude, how could I think you heartless!"

The letter read as follows:—

"DEAR HATTIE:—It seems a very long time since last I wrote, but I have abundant good news to tell you. I have now a beautiful home with the best and noblest of husbands. The one wish to be gratified is your presence here. I speak of you almost unceasingly to my husband, who knows how much we love each other. Now that your holidays are coming, won't you spend them with George and me? The beautiful surroundings, I know, will please you, and perhaps you will be persuaded to live with me and share my home; it would be but a small return of the debt I owe you. Do not hesitate, come as soon as you are free. Write to us, and appoint the time of your arrival. George will meet you at the station, as we live a short distance in the country. Do not fail, dear Hattie. Love to auntie and yourself. Still your affectionate cousin,

Never did letter bring so much pleasure to a dreary spirit as Gertrude's brought to me. I shut the schoolhouse for the summer vacation with a feeling of relief and pleasure, determined to accept her invitation as early as possible. I hurried home, as I was unusually late, to meet my aunt looking for my return.

"What in the world has happened, child? You are excited; is anything wrong?"

"Nothing, auntie. I have received a letter from Gertrude, who is married, and sends me a pressing invitation to spend my holidays with her."

"But, child, surely you would not think of such a thing? You have never been away from home; the distance is long for a young girl."

"Auntie, I have determined to go, so don't try to persuade me differently. Just read Gertrude's letter, and I know you will approve."

"Well, I suppose I shall have to give you your own way," wiping her glasses prior to adjusting them on her nose.

Kissing her gratefully, I ran up stairs to pen a few lines to my cousin, fixing the time of my visit. The next task was not so easy. My wardrobe was not very extensive, and to adapt it for the advent at hand required tact and ingenuity. However, with my aunt's sensible judgment, combined with my own taste, in less than a week I was perfectly satisfied with my outfit.

The day of my departure came at last, intolerably warm, but bright and sunny, as July days usually are. I bade my aunt an affectionate farewell, with a tear as I looked back, only to see her gazing at me through the window. I half regretted the step I was about to take, as the distance lengthened and I could see her dear old face no more, and I thought how lonely she would be in my absence. But I unconsciously drifted from home thoughts as I passed my way through the crowd of passengers all ready to board the train.

During the entire journey my thoughts were busy with my intended visit. I had pictured to myself Gertrude's home, waiting to receive me; but how should I recognize him?

At last my destination was reached, and my heart gave a throb as I stepped from the train to the platform, anxiously scanning every face, hoping to find a friend. Suddenly my attention was attracted by a gentleman seated in a carriage behind a magnificent span of grays. I perceived at a glance that I was the subject of his earnest gaze.

"Gertrude's husband," I thought. "How noble looking, and how worthy of Gertrude!"

"I hope I have the honor of addressing Miss Hattie Lawrence," he said, approaching.

"I am she," I ventured timidly, vainly endeavoring to suppress a characteristic diffidence.

Evidently perceiving my embarrassment, he cordially extended his hand.

"I am happy to meet you, Miss Lawrence; you must be very tired after so long a ride. If you are ready I will help you to the carriage." Gertrude is awaiting your arrival anxiously. Her husband was called from home this morning, on business; consequently the pleasant duty of meeting you fell on his brother, Phil."

I must have showed evidence of mistaking his introductory statement, for he added, his blue eyes beaming with humor,—

"I hope you can trust yourself to me."

I said yes, and he helped me to the carriage. In a short time we had left the depot and the village far behind. The gentle animals leisurely trotted along as we gained a gradual ascent in the road, which gave us an unobstructed view of one of the most beautiful landscapes I had ever seen. To the north stood a range of massive cliffs, out of whose highest peak came the ceaseless roar of a mighty cataract, its silver spray being just then embellished by all the beautiful hues of the rainbow caused by the last lingering rays of the setting sun. Beneath, lay the smiling valley, luxuriantly garbed with the richest treasures of the season.

Beyond, stood a grove, and wrapped in its bosom could be seen several white cottages, an occasional gleam of sunshine transforming the windows into burnished gold.

I ventured to break the silence, being hardly capable of controlling the impulse.

"This is one of the most charming spots I have ever seen."

Mr. Dent smiled.

"I perceive, Miss Lawrence, that you are an admirer of nature."

"I am, indeed," I replied.

"I am glad you have come, Miss Hattie," he continued; "we are so lonely at the grove! I hope your visit will be a pleasant one."

I thanked him with as much composure as I could muster, and we relapsed into silence.

At last my journey was ended; for Gertrude's familiar face peeped at me from the portals of a pretty villa, and a minute later we embraced each other.

"Hattie, you must be very tired. Come, now, tea is ready. But first I have something to show you which I know you will love."

She led the way to an adjoining room, where a sweet baby lay asleep in its cradle.

"Oh, Gertrude, why did you not mention this darling's existence to me before?"

"Because I wanted to surprise you."

I kissed the sweet child carefully, lest I should interrupt its peaceful slumber, and then followed Gertrude to the dining room, where I met George, Gertrude's husband, whose hearty welcome and generous hospitality made me feel quite at home.

It is needless to describe how pleasantly I was received. It seemed to me like coming into new life, as it really was, for when I returned to my aunt I was the promised bride of Philip Dent.

Gertrude and I live near each other. We often talk of old times. My dear aunt has gone to her last resting place, where she has met her well-earned reward.

Journalism in India.

These native journals are very singular affairs. They are purely a product of the import of Western civilization upon the Eastern mind, the first one ever issued in the country bearing the date of 1818. Their circulation, as a rule, is very small, sometimes merely nominal, although occasionally when the price is very low, a cent a copy or less—the number published may run up towards a thousand. Of the 36 vernacular newspapers published in the northwest provinces in 1872, only 245 were in circulation, and even of these the government took a large proportion, chiefly for the use of its school teachers and to encourage the feeble efforts of Indian journalism in its infancy. The *Albion*, the oldest and largest of the largest number of subscribers (no less than 381), but of these only 191 were native; 100 copies were taken by the government, 35 by Europeans and 52 were exchanged. One paper, the *Buddh* of Calcutta, issued 105 copies of which 100 went to the government and 5 to natives; the *Jagat Samachar* issued 87, of which 80 were taken by the government, 5 were exchanged, 1 by an European and 1 by a native. This is truly the day of small things. But these that we have mentioned are rather extreme cases. Three of the native journals in these same northwest provinces had each from 200 to 250 native subscribers; and in Bombay, where public opinion is more advanced and education more diffused, the figures are much better. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, published weekly at Calcutta, has a circulation of nearly 100,000. The character of the English papers in this country is less peculiar. The chief traits about them which strike one fresh from contact with the vigor and power of American journalism are their dullness, their lack of enterprise and general dullness. It is easy to explain why they are, as a rule, thus flat and uninteresting. Their scope is very limited in every way. There is a great dearth of live topics. Though India has nearly three hundred millions of inhabitants, it is only a very small fraction of these that can be taken into account by the journalist, either as furnishing him with themes to write about, or people to read what he has written. The chaotic history of nearly all these millions can be summed up in a brief sentence: they are born, they work hard to keep soul and body together for a brief period, and then they die. Then again, matters which in a free country are settled by the public, and hence need to be publicly discussed, are here settled quietly by a handful of officials without any public discussion at all. The Indian government is a bureau of despotism, tempered by the influence of public opinion in England, but caring not to nothing for public opinion in India. This is discrediting to a journalist of first-class ability, who writes to account for the things in his generation, and tends to make the number of such who come to remain in India very small. Furthermore, the English-reading public of India is a very small thing, hence a really good journal, to pay at all with so limited a subscription list, has to be high priced. To illustrate this, it may be mentioned that the *Pioneer*, the leading daily paper in India, published at Calcutta, charges \$11 a year, and one of the religious weeklies in the same city costs \$9 per annum. No other paper in the country has anything like the circulation of the *Pioneer*. There are four of the chief dailies in the presidency towns have between 1500 and 2000 subscribers, and the rest have very small circulations, with some small pickings in the country. As a rule, the support is very precarious, and the papers short-lived. They spring suddenly into existence, and die, or for a while prosperously or otherwise, according to the ability or the money of the one man on whose shoulders they rest. When he gets tired of his burden, or when he wins, or for any other reason, the papers disappear as quickly as they rose.

A young elephant was recently brought into the Court of Exchequer in London. He was accused of frightening a horse, and thereby damaging a young lady contained in the carriage attached thereto, and his mild and playful behavior in Court, where he amused himself by picking hats off the table, convinced everybody that he did not mean to do it, and the case was compromised.

The Duke of Sutherland, who is a thorough practical engineer, drove the locomotive attached to the train which conveyed the Prince and Princess of Wales around the royal agricultural show.

A Chamber of Death.

(Oreville Mercury, August 1.)

Word was brought to this city a week ago this morning that the water had all been pumped out of the Banner mine, and the skeletons of the men buried by the cave of twenty years ago recovered. L. H. Ayers, foreman of the mine, offered to transport us to the lower regions. We shed our good clothes, put on gum boots and coat, an old hat, and clambered into the big iron bucket. Down, down, down we went! Two hundred feet isn't but a short distance on earth's surface, but it seems a terrible long way when descending a mining shaft. The bottom was reached in safety, and we scrambled out into a pool of water and mud about two feet deep. Candles were lighted, and following the tunnel a distance of fifteen yards, we came to a ladder leading up to the old level broken into by the blasts set off a week or ten days previous. 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